

CLAIMS

1. A recording/viewing support apparatus for supporting recording or viewing a program selected by a user as a desired program from among programs scheduled to be aired as digital broadcasts, said apparatus comprising:

5 program specifying information obtaining means for obtaining program specifying information that specifies said desired program based on an operation by said user;

 weather forecast information obtaining means for obtaining, based on said program specifying information, weather forecast
10 information for relevant weather at a location where said digital broadcast is received during a broadcast time period of said desired program as relevant weather forecast information;

 determining means for determining, based on said relevant weather forecast information, whether said relevant weather will
15 be so bad or not as to degrade said desired program in image quality or sound quality; and

 notifying means for giving, when said determining means determines that said relevant weather will be bad, a notice of a possibility of degradation in image quality or sound quality
20 of said desired program.

2. The recording/viewing support apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising:

 searching means for searching, when said determining means

determines that said relevant weather will be bad, for a same
5 program to be aired at different time, which is a program that
is equal in content to said desired program and is scheduled to
be aired in a time period different from the broadcast time period
of said desired program; and

same program information displaying means for displaying
10 information that specifies said same program to be aired at
different time found by said searching means.

3. The recording/viewing support apparatus according to
claim 1, wherein

said program specifying information obtaining means
includes:

5 receiving means for receiving said digital broadcast
and generating a transport stream;

program information displaying means for displaying
a program list based on program sequence information included in
said transport stream; and

10 input operation means, operated by the user for
selecting said desired program from among programs shown in said
program list, for obtaining said program specifying information
based on the operation by said user.

4. The recording/viewing support apparatus according to
claim 2, wherein

said program specifying information obtaining means
includes:

5 receiving means for receiving said digital broadcast
and generating a transport stream;

program information displaying means for displaying
a program list based on program sequence information included in
said transport stream; and

10 input operation means, operated by the user for
selecting said desired program from among programs shown in said
program list, for obtaining said program specifying information
based on the operation by said user, and

said searching means searches for said same program to be
15 aired at different time by using said program sequence
information.

5. The recording/viewing support apparatus according to
claim 2, wherein

when said searching means finds said same program to be
aired at different time, said weather forecast information
5 obtaining means obtains weather forecast information for weather
during a broadcast time period of said same program to be aired
at different time as new relevant weather forecast information,

when said new relevant weather forecast information is
obtained, said determining means determines, based on said new
10 relevant weather forecast information, whether the weather during
the broadcast time period of said same program to be aired at
different time will be so bad or not as to degrade said desired
program in image quality or sound quality, and

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said notifying means gives the notice of the possibility
15 of degradation in image quality or sound quality of said same
program to be aired at different time during the broadcast time
period when the weather is determined as bad.

6. The recording/viewing support apparatus according to
claim 2, wherein

said searching means searches not only digital broadcast
programs but also analog broadcast programs for said same program
5 to be aired at different time.

7. The recording/viewing support apparatus according to
claim 1 or 2, wherein

said weather forecast information obtaining means includes
receiving means for receiving a data broadcast, and obtains said
5 relevant weather forecast information from said data broadcast.

8. The recording/viewing support apparatus according to
claim 1 or 2, wherein

said weather forecast information obtaining means includes
interfacing means for accessing to the Internet, and obtains,
5 through the interfacing means, said relevant weather forecast
information via the Internet.

9. The recording/viewing support apparatus according to
claim 1 or 2, wherein

when a probability of precipitation included in said
relevant weather forecast information is larger than a
5 predetermined value, said determining means determines that said

relevant weather will be so bad as to degrade said desired program in image quality or sound quality.

10. The recording/viewing support apparatus according to claim 1 or 2, wherein

when a laundry index included in said relevant weather forecast information is smaller than a predetermined value, said
5 determining means determines that said relevant weather will be so bad as to degrade said desired program in image quality or sound quality.

11. The recording/viewing support apparatus according to claim 1 or 2, further comprising:

storing means for storing correlation data that relates a probability of precipitation to a receive level degradation
5 probability defined as a probability at which a receive level of said digital broadcast becomes smaller than a predetermined level threshold value, wherein

said determining means calculates, based on said correlation data, the receive level degradation probability
10 corresponding to the probability of precipitation included in said relevant weather forecast information and, when the calculated receive level degradation probability is larger than a predetermined probability threshold value, determines that said relevant weather will be so bad as to degrade said desired program
15 in image quality or sound quality.

12. The recording/viewing support apparatus according to

claim 1 or 2, further comprising:

storing means for storing correlation data that relates a laundry index to a receive level degradation probability defined as a probability at which a receive level of said digital broadcast becomes smaller than a predetermined level threshold value, wherein

said determining means calculates, based on said correlation data, the receive level degradation probability corresponding to the laundry index included in said relevant weather forecast information and, when the calculated receive level degradation probability is larger than a predetermined probability threshold value, determines that said relevant weather will be so bad as to degrade said desired program in image quality or sound quality.

13. A recording/viewing support apparatus for supporting recording or viewing a program selected by a user as a desired program from among programs scheduled to be aired as digital broadcasts, said apparatus comprising:

program specifying information obtaining means for obtaining program specifying information that specifies said desired program based on an operation by said user;

weather forecast information obtaining means for obtaining, based on said program specifying information, weather forecast information for relevant weather at a location where said digital broadcast is received during a broadcast time period of said

desired program as relevant weather forecast information;

storing means for storing correlation data that relates the weather forecast information to a receive level degradation probability defined as a probability at which a receive level of
15 said digital broadcast is smaller than a predetermined level threshold value; and

notifying means for obtaining the receive level degradation probability corresponding to said relevant weather forecast
20 information, and notifying said user of the obtained receive level degradation probability as information indicative of a possibility of degradation in image quality or sound quality of said desired program.

14. The recording/viewing support apparatus according to claim 13, wherein

said correlation data relates said receive level degradation probability to a probability of precipitation or a
5 laundry index included in said relevant weather forecast information.